

**MINUTES OF THE 2004 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MARCH 10, 2004 ALTON SCHOOL GYMNASIUM
ALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Pursuant to the foregoing Warrant, the voters met at the Alton School Gymnasium on Wednesday, March 10, 2004 at 7 o'clock in the evening to act on the balance of the Warrant Articles. Reverend Peter Bolster offered the invocation. Moderator Mark Northridge called the meeting to order promptly at 7:05p.m. The Moderator led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman James Washburn thanked Selectman William Ryan for his many years of service to the Town of Alton and further presented him with a plaque.

Moderator Northridge thanked the people who volunteered to work at the polls and count the ballots in the evening.

Moderator Northridge introduced the Board of Selectmen, Chairman, James Washburn, Vice Chairman, Patricia Fuller, Stephan McMahon, Alan Sherwood, William Ryan, Town Administrator, Russ Bailey, Town Clerk, Lisa Waterman, Town Attorney, James Sessler, Town Attorney, Sean Tanguay and Recording Clerk, Christine Whalen. Mr. Northridge introduced the Budget Committee Members, Chairman, Cydney Johnson, Vice Chairman, Loring Carr, Gerry Theodora, Greg Fuller, John Brooks and the Selectman's Representative, Alan Sherwood.

The Moderator read the Rules of the Meeting. All votes would be taken by show of cards or by standing count when a vote was in doubt. A motion to move an Article requires a 2/3 vote. Articles would be read before acting upon, amendments must be in writing and articles, and all amendments will be read before final action. The Moderator will announce the decision before proceeding to the next article. Moderator Northridge acknowledged that there was a lengthy list of Articles and would try to complete the meeting but in the event that it becomes late in the evening the meeting will be recessed and reconvened on Saturday, March 13, 2004 at 1:00p.m.

ARTICLE 1 To choose all necessary Town Officers for which there are vacancies, for such terms as may be permitted by law; and to elect two Selectmen for three years, one Selectmen for one year, one Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, one Library Trustee for three years, one Fire Ward for three years, one Fire Ward for two years, one Fire Ward for one year, one Moderator for two years, one Cemetery Trustee for three years, one Water Commissioner for three years, three Budget Committee Members for three years, three Budget Committee Members for two years, one Budget Committee Member for one year, two Planning Board Members for three years and one Supervisor of the Checklist for six years.

ARTICLE 2 To vote on questions relating to Zoning Amendments recommended by the Alton Planning Board.

Moderator Northridge announced the results of Article 1 and Article 2 voted on March 9, 2004 with a count of 1025 votes cast.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00)** to replace the water main on Appleyard Lane (fka: Pine Street Extension); and the total amount shall be borne by the water system rate payers and not by general taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Article 3 was moved by Richard Quindley and seconded by Steve McMahon. There were no questions regarding the Article and no discussion.

A vote was taken on Article 3 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$20,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty-seven Thousand Dollars (\$37,000.00)** for the purpose of purchasing a new assessing software system, hardware and converting the current records over to the new system; and to further the authorize withdrawal of Twenty-two Thousand Three Hundred Eighty (\$22,380.00) Dollars from the Capital Reserve Fund for revaluation and the balance of Fourteen Thousand Six Hundred Twenty (\$14,620.00) Dollars from general taxation. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7:VI and will not lapse until completed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Sherwood, seconded by Selectman Washburn.

Selectman Sherwood stated that the article is to replace the current system, which was developed by DRA a number of years ago. The State has subsequently discontinued the maintenance of the system and has suggested that they convert to another system in 2004.

A vote was taken on Article 4 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$37,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00)** for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new police patrol vehicle. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn, seconded by Selectman Sherwood.

Police Chief, Kevin Iwans stated that this request is part of the Police Department's yearly vehicle maintenance program. The vehicle to be rotated out is a 1999 vehicle with 134,000 miles. If the vehicle is not replaced now then two will have to be replaced next year.

Richard Macdonald questioned how many cruisers the Department has all together?

Police Chief Iwans stated that we have 4 high profile vehicles with lights, one low profile Chevy Impala and one 1997 Crown Victoria K-9 vehicle which was rebuilt through a donation.

A vote was taken on Article 5 and passed.

Selectman McMahon moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$25,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to establish a capital reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of renovation and expansion of the police building; and to raise and appropriate **Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00)** to be placed in this fund; and to appoint the Selectmen as Agents to expend from this reserve fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Sherwood, seconded by Selectman Washburn.

Selectman Sherwood stated that the Public Safety Building Committee recommends expansion to the existing Police and Fire Departments. He further stated that there is a summary of the committee's findings and recommendations on page 75 of the Town Report.

Police Chief Iwans stated that the Police Department is going through its accreditation and the current facility does not meet the New Hampshire Police standards for full accreditation. One of the issues is that the facility is lacking in areas of preserving evidence, holding cells, inventory controls and room for confidentiality. He further stated that the capital reserve fund would put a plan in place for future expansion so there will not be a heavy tax burden on the citizens.

A vote was taken on Article 6 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$40,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirteen Thousand Dollars (\$13,000.00)** to be added to the Library Elevator Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Nancy Jordan and seconded by Shirley Copeland.

Nancy Jordan asked if there were any questions regarding the Article. Ruth Messier asked how much money is in the Capital Reserve Fund. Nancy stated that \$13,000 was placed in the fund last year plus \$22,860.80. The total projected cost is \$51,000 for installation.

A vote was taken on Article 7 and passed.

Selectman McMahon moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Ryan seconded and the motion passed. **\$13,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Eighteen Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$18,500.00)** for the purpose of purchasing a new 4x4 vehicle for the Building/Health Dept. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen - not recommended by the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman McMahon and seconded by Selectman Ryan.

Code Official Brian Boyers stated that this is a one-time purchase of a 2004 Ford Escape, which is a smaller version of the Explorer, slated to last 8-10 years. The current vehicle has 167,000 miles.

Budget Committee Chairwoman Cydney Johnson stated the reason the Budget Committee did not recommend this item was to keep the tax rate as low as possible. She further stated that the Committee also looked at next year's vehicle in rotation from the police department.

Alan Sherwood stated that the CIP Committee did recommend this item as the Code Official is on the road every day to visit job sites in town and many of the sites require a 4 wheel drive vehicle.

A vote was taken on Article 8 and passed

Selectman Ryan moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed. **\$18,500.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to advise the Board of Selectmen that it is the intent of the town meeting that the town will not spend public funds to provide winter maintenance for private roads in the Town of Alton.

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn and seconded by Selectman Ryan.

Barbara Bevin, a resident on a private road stated that she currently pays the Town for winter maintenance and questioned Attorney Sessler as to what happens to Article 10 if Article 9 passes. Attorney Sessler stated that if Article 9 is passed it is an advisory Article only and does not affect Article 10.

Cydney Johnson speaking as a citizen stated that she resides on Linwood Drive and is provided winter maintenance and to discontinue service would be wrong. She further stated that when she purchased her property she was told that when the road was developed to a certain percentage that the Town could be petitioned to take it over. The subsequent problem being that the road was built to Town specs in 1986 and the road does not meet the minimum standards of 2003. She further stated that the road is not only used by residents but by all and that the people who live on this road pay taxes and deserve the same services.

A motion was made by Donald LeMay, seconded by Cydney Johnson to amend Article 9 to read "To see if the Town will vote to advise the Board of Selectmen that it is the intent of the town meeting that the town will not spend public funds to provide winter maintenance for future private roads in the Town of Alton."

Discussion ensued.

Mark Divito stated that there are 207 private roads in the Town and that they are spending money on 11 out of 207. Cydney Johnson stated that the Town is not spending money on these roads as they are paying for the winter maintenance in addition to their tax bill. She further stated that the answer is not to punish people on private roads but the issue being how the town takes over private roads.

Ruth Messier stated that she is wondering what this vote will do in the end as she remembers many years ago the Town voted that they would not maintain private roads. She further questioned if there is an RSA that prohibits plowing and maintaining private roads with tax dollars?

Attorney Sessler stated that there are qualifications and exceptions to the rules. He further stated that pursuant to statute the Town can assess rents to maintain roads. Currently there is 11 private roads being maintained and the general rule is in effect that the Town cannot spend tax dollars to maintain private roads and that the Town must assess rents.

Ken McKinnon, a resident on Hermit Road stated that a year and a half ago there was a Public Hearing with the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen. He stated that he realizes that it is a State Law not to use tax money for this maintenance but that an agreement was worked out and he currently pays the cost of winter maintenance for the town in addition to his taxes. He further stated that the current issue is the agreement previously agreed upon and that it is not costing the taxpayers any additional money to do this.

A vote was taken on the amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on the Amended Article. There was a written request for a secret yes/no ballot vote on Article 9.

Article 9 passed with a secret ballot vote of 140 in favor and 73 against.

Cydney Johnson moved to restrict reconsideration, Barbara Bevin seconded and the motion passed. **PASSED**

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to discontinue winter road maintenance of the following private roads: Bachelor Drive, Dan Kelly Drive, Ginny Drive, Hazlett Road, Kimball Lane, Hermit Road, Eugene Drive, Proctor Road, Linwood Drive, Roger Street, and Spring Street Extension. (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn and seconded by Selectman Sherwood.

Highway Agent, Ken Roberts stated that it does not cost the Town additional money to provide winter maintenance to the 11 private roads and further stated that there are administrative costs that need to be added to the billing. He further stated that some people were billed \$27 for the winter maintenance and some of the bills were not paid.

A motion was made by Ken McKinnon, seconded by Cydney Johnson to amend Article 10 to read: To see if the Town will vote to continue winter road maintenance of the following private roads: Bachelor Drive, Dan Kelly Drive, Ginny Drive, Hazlett Road, Kimball Lane, Hermit Road, Eugene Drive, Proctor Road, Linwood Drive, Roger Street, and Spring Street Extension. (a majority vote is required)

There was discussion on the Amendment. Peter Pijoan requested a Point of Order asking the Town Attorney if this is a legal amendment because it changes the intent of the Article.

Attorney Sessler stated that he was not sure if there is a change in intent and further stated that the Amendment is a useless act and a negative vote would be a vote against the article.

Mr. McKinnon withdrew his amendment to the Article and Cydney Johnson withdrew her second.

Anna Griffin questioned the Town Attorney that if public funds are not to be used to maintain private roads and the Town is being reimbursed for the costs then the Town is not in violation then what is the issue. Attorney Sessler stated that the statute provides that winter maintenance can only be discontinued by a vote of Town Meeting.

Thomas Moore stated that he was not sure if this Article would open the Town up for a lawsuit as there are 207 private roads and only 11 roads are being singled out.

Cydney Johnson stated that the 11 roads being singled out followed procedures under the RSA and petitioned the Selectmen for the winter maintenance and have followed the legal process for acceptance.

Town Administrator, Russ Bailey stated that the 11 roads were billed for the service, but the billing system is new to the Town. He further stated that the Town is required to bill by law and there is no option as the Board of Selectmen would be in violation of the RSA.

Linda O'Neal questioned who submitted the Warrant Article. Russ Bailey stated that the Warrant Article was submitted by the Board of Selectmen.

A citizen questioned if a private road can become a public road. Town Administrator, Russ Bailey stated that it can be requested by the landowners and there is a process by Statute and Town Policy. A private road would remain private until the Board of Selectmen accept a layout built to Town Standards or would have to be accepted by Town Meeting vote to accept the road as a town maintained road.

Attorney Sessler stated that a private road is a road that is not public. He stated that some are old and would never be accepted by the town. There are cases of a brand new subdivision not being accepted because they are not built to town standards. He also stated residents on any private road have an opportunity to petition Selectmen to accept a road as a public road.

A motion was made by Dwayne Hammond to move the question, seconded by Cydney Johnson.

A request was put forward in writing for a secret yes/no ballot on Article 10.

A vote was taken on Article 10 as presented. Moderator Northridge stated that a YES vote would discontinue maintenance and a NO vote would not.

Article 10 failed with a secret ballot vote of 53 in favor and 165 against.

Barbara Bevin moved to restrict reconsideration, Peter Pijoan seconded and the motion passed.

FAILED

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00)** for the purpose of developing a design and promotional materials for a new Park/Historical area located on Depot Road. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until the layout is completed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. The Downtown Revitalization Committee would use this to obtain grants and fund raising for the development of this site. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectwoman Fuller and seconded by Selectman Ryan.

Judy Fry stated that the project will be a multipurpose use area incorporating recreation, history and exercise with a mini-walking path toward Ginny Douglas Park. It will also have a small playground. Judy further stated that the Downtown Revitalization Committee meetings are open to the public and invited all to attend.

Deanna O'Shaughnessy explained the vision of the park being centered around the old Boston & Maine railroad yard building located behind the Town Hall. The money needed to revitalize the building will be raised by grants and fundraisers. The Downtown Revitalization Committee will use \$2,500 towards matching grants and \$2,500 for promotional materials such as brochures.

Selectwoman Fuller pointed out that the Committee would not be back year after year looking for money as the project will commence through grant money and subsequently funding would be obtained through fundraising.

A vote was taken on Article 11 and passed.

Selectwoman Fuller moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Ryan seconded and the motion passed.

\$5,000.00 PASSED

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00)** to be placed in the Benefit Pay Expendable Trust Fund, as previously established. Said funds are recommended by the Town Auditors to be used to pay for benefits accrued by Town Employees and redeemed when they leave employment with the Town of Alton, in accordance with the Town Personnel Policy. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman McMahon and seconded by Selectman Sherwood.

Steve McMahon stated that the Selectman are requesting to add to the Capital Reserve Fund established in 2001. The current balance is \$30,397. A number of people have left the Town's employment in 2002 and 2003. This request would replenish the funds in the Capital Reserve Fund.

A vote was taken on Article 12 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Fuller seconded and the motion passed. **\$25,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 13: Elderly Exemption. Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Alton based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age to 75 years \$20,000.00; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years \$30,000.00; for a person 80 years of age or older \$40,000.00. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the Taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$25,000.00; or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$44,000.00; and own net assets not in excess of \$50,000.00, excluding the value of the person's residence.

The Article was moved by Selectman Sherwood, seconded by Selectman Washburn.

Alan Sherwood explained that the purpose of this Article is to assist low-income elderly citizens to enable them to live in their own homes. The Article would essentially double the exemption. The reason for the change at this point is to compensate as assessments have doubled in the past 7 years.

Rev. Peter Bolster questioned how many people in Town would qualify for the exemption. Selectman Sherwood stated that there are currently 24 households who qualify for the exemption. The current total tax dollars not collected is \$6,000. Rev. Bolster suggested that the amount of exemption be increased to benefit more senior citizens within the community.

Tim Kinnon stated that he agreed that the amount should be increased.

A motion was made by Tim Morgan, seconded by Dwayne Hammond to amend Article 10 to read: Elderly Exemption. Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Alton based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age to 75 years \$40,000.00; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years \$60,000.00; for a person 80 years of age or older \$80,000.00. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the Taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$25,000.00; or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$44,000.00; and own net assets not in excess of \$50,000.00, excluding the value of the person's residence.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 13 and passed.

Selectman Sherwood moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **PASSED**

ARTICLE 14: Veteran's Exemption. Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 72:28,V&VI for an optional veteran's tax credit and expanded qualifying war service for veterans seeking the tax credit. The optional veteran's tax credit will be **\$200.00** rather than \$100.00. (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman McMahon, seconded by Selectwoman Fuller.

Selectman McMahon stated that the current exemption is \$100. Three hundred and one (301) people are enrolled for a total of \$30,100. The Selectmen are looking to double the exemption.

A motion was made by Jonathan Downing, seconded by Tim Kinnon to Amend the Article to read: Veteran's Exemption. Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 72:28,V&VI for an optional veteran's tax credit and expanded qualifying war service for veterans seeking the tax credit. The optional veteran's tax credit will be **\$500.00** rather than \$100.00. (a majority vote is required)

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 14 and passed.

Selectman McMahon moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectwoman Fuller seconded and the motion passed. **PASSED**

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00)** to be added to the Solid Waste Center Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn, seconded by Selectman Ryan.

Alan Sherwood read a brief statement submitted by the Solid Waste Director, Scott Simmonds, explaining that the Center is looking to replace a 1982 loader in the year 2006. The Capital Improvement Committee recommends this Capital Reserve over a three-year period. The current balance in the Capital Reserve Fund is \$10,153.

A vote was taken on Article 14 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed. **\$25,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Hundred Thirty-three Thousand Dollars (\$233,000.00)** for the purpose of closing the septage lagoons on Rines Road and for the disposal of the solids at an approved facility. A portion of this sum to come from fund balance (surplus) of \$116,500.00 and the balance of \$116,500.00 is to come from general taxation. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7,VI and will not lapse

until completed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectwoman Fuller, seconded by Selectman Washburn.

Selectwoman Fuller explained that the septage lagoon was closed last year. This will be the final request to finish the cleaning up of the septage lagoons.

A vote was taken on Article 16 and passed.

Selectman McMahon moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Ryan seconded and the motion passed. **\$233,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Seven Thousand Dollars (\$7,000.00)** to purchase a new Tractor with snow blower and plow for the Parks & Recreation/Grounds Maintenance Dept. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until purchased or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn, seconded by Selectman Sherwood.

The Director of the Grounds and Maintenance Department, Kellie Troendle stated that the Department is responsible for the plowing of the Alton Bay parking lot as well as the Town sidewalks. Last year it was voted to establish a Capital Reserve fund. The current fund has \$10,000 and this appropriation would allow the Department to purchase a tractor.

A vote was taken on Article 17 and passed.

Selectman Sherwood moved to restrict reconsideration, selectman Ryan seconded and the motion passed. **\$7,000.00.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing a Parks & Recreation/Grounds Maintenance Dept. pickup truck; and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000.00)** to be placed in this fund; and to appoint the Selectmen as Agents to expend from this reserve fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Washburn, seconded by Selectman Sherwood.

Kellie Troendle explained that the existing work truck is 11 years old with 127,000 miles on it and is very costly to maintain.

Earl Bagley questioned where her present truck came from. Kellie stated that it was passed down from the Highway Department.

Discussion ensued on the Highway Department's rotation of vehicles and if a vehicle could be passed down by the Highway Department. Highway Agent, Ken Roberts stated it will be kept as a back-up truck.

A standing vote was taken on Article 18 with 75 in favor and 47 against.

Kellie Troendle moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed. **\$12,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty-four Thousand Dollars (\$24,000.00)** for the purpose of repairing the town docks. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the repairs are completed or by December 31, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectwoman Fuller, seconded by Selectman Washburn.

Kellie Troendle stated that the current boards are disintegrating and are a safety issue. Further, it is a liability issue for the Town. The request is for maintenance and repair of existing docks.

A vote was taken on Article 19 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed. **\$24,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of establishing a new town beach; and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00)** to be placed in that fund. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen - not recommended by the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

The Article was moved by Selectman Jim Washburn, seconded by Selectman McMahon.

Parks & Recreation Director, Kellie Troendle stated that the existing Town beach is insufficient. The goal is to come up with a plan to provide beach access to the Town before all waterfront property is non-existent. She further stated that there is an active Committee conducting site visits looking for potential properties. To meet these needs, the Town should start planning for the purchase of land. The start of the Capital Reserve Fund will give the Town the opportunity to save over time until the Town can make a purchase. Kellie explained that the Lake is the most tremendous asset to the Town and the land is disappearing quickly and is being developed. A Town beach would benefit all residents of Alton.

Tim Morgan questioned if there are restraints on a Capital Reserve Fund and do we need an agent to expend. Attorney Sessler stated that the funds can only be used as stated in the Article.

Ruth Messier questioned why the Budget Committee was not recommending this item. Loring Carr stated with the large tax year with school and there is no plan for the purchase of land, the Budget Committee did not recommend this Article.

Deanna O'Shaughnessy, Marcella Perry, Herbert Portigue and Rick Henderson, a member of the Beach Committee, spoke in favor of the Article.

Selectman McMahon stated that the intent of the Article is to start putting money away now to have something just in case a piece of land becomes available.

Robert Boyce stated that he did not see the need to put the money away at this time as there is no agent to expend if land does become available.

A Motion was made by Tim Morgan to amend the Article to include the Selectmen as agents to expend. The motion was seconded by Tim Kinnon.

A vote was taken on the Article as amended and failed.

Discussion ensued.

A vote was taken on the original Article and failed.

Budget Committee Member, Greg Fuller moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$50,000.00 FAILED**

A motion was made by Selectman Ryan, seconded by Greg Fuller to adjourn. Discussion ensued. After discussion the motion was withdrawn. Another Motion was made by Selectman Ryan and seconded by Greg Fuller to discuss Article 21 and then adjourn. The Motion failed and Town Meeting was adjourned at 11:05p.m. with the intent to reconvene on Saturday, March 13, 2004 at 1:00p.m.

Town Meeting was reconvened on Saturday, March 13, 2004 at 1:02p.m.

Moderator Northridge led in the Pledge of Allegiance, reintroduced the Head Table, stated that he had announced the results of the election on Wednesday evening and that the results were posted at the back of the gym and reread the Moderators Rules for the meeting.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of **Four Million, Six Hundred Forty Three Thousand, Five Hundred and One Dollars (\$4,643,501.00)** for general municipal operations. The Selectmen recommend **(\$4,647, 399.00)** This article does not include special or individual articles addressed. (a majority vote is required)

Budget Committee Chairwoman, Cydney Johnson moved the Article, Committee Member, Loring Carr seconded.

Selectman Sherwood stated that the Board of Selectmen support the number that is recommended by the Budget Committee as there is only a \$3,898.00 difference. The major difference is \$3,400, which is for the fuel contract and electricity.

A motion was made by Richard Macdonald, to Amend Article 21 to \$4,393,501. Ruth Messier seconded the Motion for discussion. Mr. Macdonald stated that the difference is to eliminate \$250,000 out of the Police Department budget.

Discussion ensued. Moderator Northridge stated that the Amended Article would only change the bottom line and you cannot direct to remove money out of a specific budget line item. Mr. Macdonald questioned how cuts could be made to specific line items within a department's budget. Attorney Tanguay stated that the Town's Budget is a bottom line budget approved by DRA and the amendment would reduce the bottom line budget by that amount but it is up to the discretion of the Selectmen as to where the cuts are made. Discussion ensued.

Police Chief Iwans stated that the Police Departments Budget currently presented represents an overall increase of 2.8% and that there is nothing in the budget that is not needed and requested that the townspeople vote down the amendment.

Road Agent, Ken Roberts stated that the Selectmen came back to him and requested that he cut \$50,000 out of his budget. Subsequently, the budget was cut and recommendations to the Selectmen were items that need to be done. The overall budget was scrutinized by both the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee and the budget being presented was recommended by both boards.

Discussion ensued on the validity of removing a line item from the budget.

Budget Committee Chairwoman, Cydney Johnson stated that the Police Department had one of the most reasonable budgets as there was only a 2.9% increase. She further stated that if \$250,000 is removed from the bottom line that it would be 31% cut.

A motion was made by Selectman McMahon, seconded by Selectwoman Fuller to move the question.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and failed.

Ruth Messier questioned the operating budget for the Fire Department. Specifically, the salary for the Fire Chief and how many hours it covers and if it includes benefits.

Russ Bailey stated it is for 40 hours a week and the same benefits as any full time employee. Cydney Johnson said this year's salary starting March 31st through December 31st is \$40,190.07.

Laurie Boyce questioned when the Fire Chief became a full time position. Ken Roberts stated that it will not be a full time position until March 31st and that it was a decision of the Fire Wards and presented to the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

A motion was made by Lisa Jones on behalf of the Alton Youth League to Amend the Article to read "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of **Four Million, Six Hundred Forty Four Thousand, One Hundred and Sixty Five Dollars (\$4,644,165.00)** for general municipal operations. The motion was seconded by Richard Macdonald. Lisa explained that the increase is \$664.00 for bleachers and benches for Jones

Field. She explained that the AYL provides a great service to over 200 children. She further stated that the AYL does a lot of work to the field at no cost to the Town.

Selectman Sherwood stated that \$664.00 was approved in the budget and the Board felt that the other half could be obtained through fundraising. Loring Carr of the Budget Committee stated that the Budget Committee agreed with the Selectmen's recommendation.

There was a Motion and second to move the question. The motion passed.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 21 and passed.

Budget Committee Chairwoman, Cydney Johnson moved to restrict reconsideration, Budget Committee Member, Loring Carr seconded and the motion passed. **\$4,644,165.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty-Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Six Dollars (\$55,476.00)** for the purpose of purchasing 12 air packs; and to further authorize the withdrawal of \$27,738.00 from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and the balance of \$27,738.00 to come from general taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved the Article, Fire Ward, John Scott seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Alan Johnson made a motion to amend the Article to read "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty-Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Six Dollars (\$55,476.00)** for the purpose of purchasing 12 air packs and 12 spare bottles; and to further authorize the withdrawal of \$27,738.00 from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and the balance of \$27,738.00 to come from general taxation. Said amount to be partially offset by revenues from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant estimated to be \$9,180.00." The motion was seconded by Ken Roberts.

Fire Chief Johnson explained that the Department has qualified for a Federal Grant from FEMA, which is being added to the Article. The amended article would include 12 air packs, 12 bottles and \$27,738,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund. The Amendment adds the revenue of \$9,180.00 from the grant.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 22 and passed.

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectwoman Fuller seconded and the motion passed. **\$55,476.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty-eight Thousand Dollars (\$38,000.00)** for the purpose of purchasing an air compressor for the Fire Fighter air tanks and to authorize withdrawal of \$38,000.00 from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for payment and not by general taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman McMahon moved the Article, Fire Ward, Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief, Alan Johnson made a motion to Amend Article 23 to read: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty-Four Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$44,460.00)** for the purpose of purchasing an air compressor for the Fire Fighter air tanks and to authorize withdrawal of \$4,446.00 from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Said amount is partially offset by revenues from the Assistance to Firefighter Grant estimated to be \$40,014.00. The motion was seconded by Ken Roberts.

Fire Chief Johnson stated the reduced amount is due to money received through a Federal Grant. The Town must match 10% to receive the grant.

Ruth Messier questioned how much money is currently in the Capital Reserve Fund. Chief Johnson stated that there is currently \$226,757 in the Capital Reserve Fund.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 23 and passed.

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Fire Ward John Scott seconded and the motion passed. **\$44,460.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00)** for the purpose of adding a 20'x40' addition to the Central Fire Station. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until the addition is completed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved the Article, Fire Ward, John Scott seconded and the motion passed.

Selectman Sherwood referred to the recommendation submitted by the Public Safety Building Committee. Fire Chief Johnson stated that the expansion would allow an additional bay on the right hand side of the building, which will give more room for movement as well as eliminating storage problems.

A vote was taken on Article 24 and passed.

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Fire Ward John Scott seconded and the motion passed. **\$50,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 25: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a five year agreement for **Two Hundred Fifty-three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$253,500.00)** for the purpose of leasing/purchasing a rescue vehicle for the Fire Dept; and to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Seven Hundred (\$50,700.00) Dollars for the first year payment for that purpose. This lease agreement must contain an escape clause. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen - not recommended by the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman, James Washburn moved the Article, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Johnson stated that the existing rescue truck is overloaded. The rescue truck did not pass inspection and considerable work needs to be done. The vehicle was used when it was purchased and the vehicle has outlived its life expectancy of 19 years. Currently, some equipment is kept in the central station, some is kept at the bay station and some is kept on the truck. This purchase would allow for all equipment to be kept on the truck for easy access.

Budget Committee Vice-Chair, Loring Carr stated that the Budget Committee did not recommend this item as they recommended the expansion of the building and thought that this purchase could be held off for one year.

Discussion ensued.

Tom Chagnon, a member of the Fire Department stated that as the chief stated with the current rescue, other trucks must go to obtain equipment from other areas but that it was not just the equipment but manpower as well. He further stated that if manpower is sent to acquire equipment that you lose manpower for the first 10-15 minutes of response that is critical.

Richard Macdonald questioned if the current vehicle could be refurbished? Chief Johnson stated that the current vehicle is basically a plumbers van.

Dwayne Hammond questioned if the new truck would be available for mutual aide and could compensation be received from other towns. Chief Johnson stated that Alton is part of the Lakes Region Mutual Aide, which includes 38 towns. He further stated that the Town does not charge for their services nor are they charged from other towns.

Ruth Messier questioned what the interest rate would be on the lease/purchase agreement. Ken Roberts stated to the best of his recollection, the interest rate would be approximately 2.9%.

A motion was made by Laurie Boyce, seconded by Robert Boyce to amend the article to read: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a five year agreement for **Two Hundred Fifty-three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$253,500.00)** for the purpose of leasing/purchasing a rescue vehicle for the Fire Dept; and to appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Seven Hundred (\$50,700.00) Dollars out of the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund for the first year payment for this purpose. This lease agreement must contain an escape clause. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen - not recommended by the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Laurie explained that the difference in the Amendment is that the money would come out of the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund for the first year's payment.

Anna Griffin questioned if the money is taken out of the Capital Reserve Fund if there is enough left in the fund? Ken Roberts stated there would be enough money.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and passed.

A vote was taken on Article 25 as Amended and passed.

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$50,700.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty-five Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$35,100.00)** for the purpose of purchasing a new ambulance; and to authorize the withdrawal of \$35,100.00 from the Special Revenue Ambulance Fund, and no amount to be raised from taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman, James Washburn moved the Article, Selectwoman Fuller seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Johnson stated that three years ago the Town purchased a new ambulance. The new ambulance is now self-supporting and was paid off two years early. The Department is looking to duplicate the current vehicle. The intent is to have two reliable ambulances. The Special Revenue Ambulance Fund currently has a balance of \$106,670.

A vote was taken on Article 26 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$50,700.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 27: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Sixteen Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-five Dollars (\$16,745.00)** for the purpose of repairs to the West Alton Fire Station, based on a new Lease Agreement. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7VI and will not lapse until the repairs are completed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever is sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman, Sherwood moved the Article, Fire Ward, Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Johnson stated that the building is currently leased to the Town. He further stated that there are resident students who live in the West Alton Fire Station and there are no bathrooms upstairs. They must go downstairs to the bathrooms. The current lease, which is under negotiations, states that the building must be maintained by the Fire Department. The money requested would be for general renovations and the addition of a bathroom upstairs.

Kitty Crues spoke on behalf of the West Alton Association. She stated that the Association would like to continue leasing the building to the Town but the building is in need of repairs.

Alan Sherwood stated the Public Safety Building Committee reiterated the need to maintain two substations, one in East Alton and one in West Alton.

Tom Moore questioned what is the length and cost of the lease. Town Administrator, Russ Bailey stated that the lease is currently in negotiations but that the goal is for a minimum 10-year lease. The current payment is \$1.00 per year.

A vote was taken on Article 27 and passed.

Selectwoman Fuller moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$16,745.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 28: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** for the purpose of equipping a new pump Truck for the Alton Fire Dept; and to authorize the withdrawal of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and no amount to be raised from taxation. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved the Article, Fire Ward, John Scott seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Johnson stated that the money will be used to replace fittings on the new truck as they do not match any other truck in the department. The money would allow the department to purchase the adaptor fittings.

Fire Ward, John Scott moved to restrict reconsideration, Fire Ward Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed. **\$10,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 29: Shall we expand the purpose of the special reserve ambulance fund established in 2000 under the provisions of RSA 31:95-C to restrict all of the revenues from ambulance fees to expenditures for the purpose of operating the ambulance service to include: vehicles, equipment, supplies, manpower, and other associated costs. Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the 'Ambulance Operation Fund', separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of revenue. (a majority vote is required)

Selectwoman Fuller moved the Article, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed.

Ken Roberts stated that the current ambulance account equips and funds the ambulance. The intent of the Article is to change how the account is managed so that the growing funds can be used for supplies and manpower. In doing so, this would reduce the money requested through taxes.

The Moderator declared the polls open at 3:05p.m.

A motion was made by Selectman Stephan McMahon, seconded by Selectwoman Fuller to move on to the next Article while the polls remain open. The Motion passed.

The polls closed at 4:05. Article 29 passed with 107 in favor and 10 against.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectwoman Fuller seconded and the motion passed.

ARTICLE 30: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Alton Fire Department Retirement Pension pay schedule by deleting the five (5%) percent per year increase and the maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent of base and authorizing a COLA increase each year equivalent to annual Town Employee COLA, as set by the Board of Selectmen. (a majority vote is required)

Selectman McMahon moved the Article, Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed.

Fire Chief Johnson stated that the Pension program was established in 1987 and the Article would clarify the original intent of the Program.

Town Administrator, Russ Bailey stated that when the program was established it was capped at a 5% increase each year with a 25% maximum increase. The present Pension does not allow for any increases. This change would allow the Town to give a COLA increase the same as all town employees.

A vote was taken on Article 30 and passed.

Fire Ward, Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **PASSED**

ARTICLE 31: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** to be added to the Bridge Replacement Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectwoman Fuller moved the Article, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Highway Agent, Ken Roberts stated that this request has been put aside for a couple of years. The Capital Reserve was established in 1995 and the current balance is \$60,444. He said Places Mill needs replacement at an estimated cost of \$355,000 and the Town's portion of the payment is 20% of the total.

A vote was taken on Article 31 and passed.

Highway Agent Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$10,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 32: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00)** to be added to the Highway Equipment/Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen, the Budget Committee recommends \$25,000.00] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman Sherwood moved the Article, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed.

Highway Agent Roberts stated that in previous years with the big expenses to the Town as well as the school, he has asked voters to vote down requested money. He further stated that he now must try to make up the funds to the Capital Reserve Fund and that the \$50,000 is not a lot to ask for the biggest equipment department within the Town.

Budget Committee Vice-Chairman, Loring Carr stated that with the large increase in the school that the Budget Committee recommended \$25,000 instead of \$50,000.

Alan Sherwood stated that the CIP looked at the future replacement schedule and that there is a legitimate need to support the \$50,000 request. The balance of the fund is currently \$64,355.00.

A vote was taken on Article 32 and passed.

Highway Agent Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$50,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 33: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** to be added to the Sand Shed Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman Washburn moved the Article, Selectwoman Fuller seconded and the motion passed.

Highway Agent Roberts stated that this Article would come up over the next few years. The project was sent out to bid and came back with an estimated cost of \$311,000. This request is a good faith effort to meet the current EPA standards.

A vote was taken on Article 33 and passed.

Selectwoman Fuller moved to restrict consideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed. **\$10,000.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 34: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000.00)** to be added to the Highway Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund, as previously established. Said amount is partially offset by revenues from the Highway Block Grant Fund estimated to be \$146,241.39. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen - the Budget Committee recommends \$725,000.00] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman Washburn moved the Article, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed.

Highway Agent Roberts stated that he wishes to implement a new plan to increase road construction from 1 mile per year to three miles per year. He further stated that the first phase of Old Wolfeboro Road is complete with two more phases to be completed.

Loring Carr made a motion to amend the Article to \$725,000, Greg Fuller seconded. Loring stated that the Budget Committee took the actual price for next years portion of the Old Wolfeboro Road contract, engineer costs and unexpected expenses and came to the figure of \$725,000.

Highway Agent Roberts stated that it would cover this years contract but would leave nothing extra for future planning and requested that citizens vote down the amendment.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and failed.

A vote was taken on Article 34 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed.

\$750,000.00 PASSED

ARTICLE 35: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00)** for the purpose of installing a water main to the Highway Dept building. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 37:7VI and will not lapse until the line is installed or by December 31st, 2005, whichever comes sooner. [Appropriation recommended by the Selectmen and not recommended by the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Selectman Washburn moved the Article, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Ken Roberts stated that the Highway Department came before you last year with a proposal for the highway department to lay this line ourselves. He stated that there is a contamination problem as the Highway Department sits on a former landfill.

Budget Committee Member, Greg Fuller stated that the Committee was told that they do have bottled drinking water and that they were never told that the water was contaminated and only used for cleaning.

Thomas Moore questioned the cost. Ken stated that the line would require 1,000 feet of new line as there is no water on the Letter S Road. He further stated that a hydrant was donated from the Water Department.

A vote was taken on Article 35 and passed

Selectman McMahon moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Washburn seconded and the motion passed.

\$10,000.00 PASSED

ARTICLE 36: To see if the Town will vote to place 50%, not to exceed **\$20,000.00** of the revenues collected from the Land Use Change Tax levied under RSA 79-A:7, in the conservation Fund previously established (March 14, 1990) under the provisions of RSA79-A:25,II. Recommended by the conservation Commission

Conservation Committee Member, Justine Gengras moved the Article, Earl Bagley seconded and the motion passed.

Justine Gengras stated that this Article would set aside money for conservation to acquire open space to the Town as the Town loses open space when property is taken out of current use. She further stated that the current cap is \$10,000 and they are asking that it be increased to \$20,000.

Discussion ensued.

A vote was taken on Article 36 and passed.

Justine Gengras moved to restrict reconsideration, Earl Bagley seconded and the motion passed.

ARTICLE 37: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Sixty-six Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-two Dollars (\$66,892.00)** for the purpose of supporting the following community organizations:

(1) Alton Community Services Program	\$ 7,500.00
(2) American Red Cross	1,397.00
(3) Community Action Program	7,771.00
(4) Genesis	5,866.00
(5) Huggins Hospital	800.00
(6) Lakes Region Community Services Council	600.00
(7) New Beginnings	1,300.00
(8) VNA - Hospice	23,640.00
(9) Youth Services Bureau	12,669.00
(10) Lakes Region Planning Commission	5,349.00

[Appropriation not recommended by the Selectmen or the Budget Committee] (a majority vote is required)

Frances Washburn moved the Article, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed.

Ruth Messier stated that this is the first year that Huggins Hospital is included on the list and that typically only non-profit organizations are on the list and further moved to Amend the Article to \$66,092.00 with the removal of Huggins Hospital. The amendment was seconded by Kendra Kanter.

Jane Cumming stated that she is employed by Alton Family Medicine and that Huggins Hospital is a non-profit organization.

Jill Debellis questioned if all of the money expended is spent on just Alton or other communities as well? She further stated that two years ago the request was \$7,500 and now it is over \$66,000.

A standing vote was taken on the Amendment with 49 in favor and 43 against.

Discussion ensued.

Dave Cumming questioned why the Article is not recommended by the Selectmen or the Budget Committee. Loring Carr stated that on the MS7 you have to either recommend or not recommend. The Budget Committee remains neutral on this Article. Alan Sherwood stated that the Selectmen made a “no recommendation” as they thought it should be up to the voters.

Frances Washburn spoke on behalf of the VNA Hospital stating that the request is for unreimbursed services spent on Alton residents.

Karen Alden spoke on behalf of Alton Community Services stating that the Town has been good to the program and that they are asking for the same amount of money as last year. She further stated that they serve families, elderly and individuals both in town and surrounding towns. The program is voluntarily manned and is open on Saturdays from 10-12.

Holly DeWald, the Director of Youth Services stated that this year’s request is the same as last year. She stated that the program diverts youths from the court system. She further stated that the program is successful and that 12 youths from Alton were serviced in 2003 and she has already received 7 referrals for this year.

Rev. Peter Bolster spoke on behalf of Genesis Health stating that this agent is being cut back by County and State Government and that they provide services that are essential to the community.

Laurie Boyce made a Motion to Amend the Article to \$33,500 in support of the organizations that had representatives present. The motion was seconded by Kellie Troendle.

Discussion ensued.

Tim Kinnon requested to move the question.

A vote was taken on the Amendment and failed.

A vote was taken on Amended Article 37 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed. **\$66,092.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 38: To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to grant an easement for the benefit of property owned by Robert J. Wright and Rosanne Wright to construct, reconstruct, maintain and repair a septic system and retaining wall adjacent to the area of land known as Railroad Avenue between the edge of the improved and traveled roadway and the property of said Wright. The Selectmen are authorized to reserve such public rights in the easement area as they determine necessary.

Selectman Washburn moved the Article, Selectman McMahon seconded and the motion passed.

Moderator Northridge requested a vote to allow a non-resident to speak on behalf of the Article. The motion passed.

Bob Wright stated that he is requesting permission for an easement for a new septic system. The system was installed using the Tax Maps as the basis of the property line. Subsequently, a survey was done on the property and it was realized that 95% of the installed septic is on his property and a small portion of approximately 2 ft. is owned by the Town.

Town Administrator, Russ Bailey stated that the Wrights are requesting an easement for the embankment and would not effect the road.

Roseanne Wright, an abutter, spoke in favor of the Article. Larry Crues, the former owner of the property requested that the Town support the Article.

Scott Stewart, an abutter to the property, stated that there is currently a lawsuit involved with the property line and that part of the embankment is involved in the suit. The Town should let the Court decide before anything is decided on property issue.

Attorney Tanguay stated that if the Town grants the easement, it would not affect the lawsuit.

A vote was taken on Article 38 and passed.

Selectman Washburn moved to restrict reconsideration, Ken Roberts seconded and the motion passed.

ARTICLE 39: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$2,700.00)** and authorize an annual cost of living increase same as the town employees for the Cemetery Trustees. The following increases effective 2004:

(1) Cemetery Chairman	\$1,200.00
(2) 2 Cemetery Trustees @ \$750.00 each	1,500.00

The purpose of this petition is to bring their salaries in the Operating Budget into line with other elected Trustees, Fire Wards and Water Commissioners of the Town of Alton. [Appropriation not recommended by the Selectmen or the Budget Committee] (By Petition)

Cemetery Chairman, Shirley Lane moved the Article, Mrs. Divito seconded and the motion passed.

Shirley Lane explained that there are 9 cemeteries in Alton and explained the duties of the Trustees including the responsibility of 2 caretakers, record keeping, attending seminars and meeting twice a month.

Selectwoman Fuller stated that this is the third year in a row that the Trustees are requesting an increase in salaries.

Discussion ensued.

Steve McMahon and Anna Griffin believe that the Trustees should be reimbursed on the same level as other similar boards in the Town.

Bob Boyce made a motion to amend the article so that the increase would become effective March 31, 2005 so that they would not be increasing an elected officials salary while they are in office. The motion was seconded by Greg Fuller.

A vote was taken on the amended article and failed.

A vote was taken on Article 39 and passed.

Ken Roberts moved to restrict reconsideration, Selectman Steve McMahon seconded and the motion passed. **\$2,700.00 PASSED**

ARTICLE 40: To hear reports of any committees, boards, trustees, commissions, officials, agents or concerned voters; and vote to accept the same. Furthermore, to conduct any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

Selectman Washburn moved the Article, Selectman Sherwood seconded and the motion passed.

Loring Carr stated that he would like to sincerely thank Selectman, Alan Sherwood and Town Administrator, Russ Bailey for a great job working with the Budget Committee in the Budget process.

Ruth Messier stated that it was a great year for both the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen and further thanked Town Administrator, Russ Bailey for his efforts in the budgeting process.

Upon a Motion by Jim Washburn, seconded by Tim Kinnon the Town Meeting was dissolved at 5:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Whalen, Clerk

“A True Copy Attest”
Lisa Waterman, Town Clerk